



"THEY JUST AREN'T THAT INTO YOU": WHY YOU AREN'T GETTING JOB OFFERS AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

Sure, we all fail occasionally. But if you've been striking out on a regular basis when it comes to accomplishing your **job search goals**, it may be time to rethink your strategy. If you're wondering why nobody is calling you back, read on for answers. **Mistake #1: You confused them.** Let's imagine a typical job search scenario: you've read about an interesting job online, so you whip up a cover letter, dash off your resume, and then wait by the phone (or computer) for a reply from a recruiter. Unfortunately, the phone doesn't ring and you're left wondering what you did wrong. Consider this possibility: you were confusing. Maybe you applied for a sales position, but you also mentioned that you'd be "open to a position in marketing or finance" in your cover letter. Or perhaps you have job experience in everything from teaching English to baking pastries, and it's all on your resume. The solution? Clarity. When you give too much information about yourself, your professional history, your future **career goals**, or anything else, for that matter, you run the risk of confusing people. As much as we'd like to think people carefully read every word we write and listen intently to what we say, chances are they don't. People are busy, time is limited, and recruiters are inundated with phone calls and emails all the time. Your job is to be direct and clear, and to get to the point. Before you send out a resume or pick up the phone, ask yourself this question: "Above everything else, what is the one thing I want the reader of this email/resume/cover letter to know about me?" Think about how you can edit - or even remove - everything on paper that doesn't fit your "one thing" requirement. For instance, if you're dying for a position in investment banking, do you really need five bullet points on your resume about your work as an English teacher? The more information you throw at somebody, the less likely the important points will be read and remembered. **Mistake #2: You bored them.** Have you seen the movie *Jerry Maguire*? If you have, you'll remember a scene where Tom Cruise is professing his love to actress Renee Zellweger. As he begins to share his feelings, she stops him and says, "You had me at hello." When it comes to writing a resume or handling yourself during an interview, you've got to "have them at hello." Think about what we said earlier: busy professionals, including recruiters and hiring managers, are inundated with emails, resumes, and other materials on a daily basis. The result? Long emails, boring letters, and unprofessional resumes get discarded, deleted, and ignored. The solution? Only communicate meaningful information that matters to the reader. If you want your resume and cover letter to stand out above the noise and competition, your written materials must be concise, clear, and deliver meaningful messages that grab the reader. Leave out clichés like, "I'm a team player," "I think outside the box," or "I'm a hard worker." Even if these things are true about you, everybody writes this stuff. Besides, these kinds of descriptors are too broad and sweeping to deliver any real meaning. Do you really believe it when someone else tells you that they are a hard worker? If you're like most people, you'll believe it when you see it. Recruiters have the same reaction. If you really are a hard worker and you want to say so, then you also need to prove it. Don't write it unless you're also prepared to offer a clear, concise example of a time when you really put the pedal to the metal. In fact, whenever you write anything about yourself, always be ready to offer up a story, an example, or some other evidence that truly demonstrates you are who you say you are.

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